



## **NEWS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **USDA Forest Service**

#### **White River National Forest**

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### **White River National Forest Seeking Public Input on the Hunter-Smuggler Mountain Cooperative Plan and Projects**

Aspen, Colo. (March 27, 2013) – The Aspen-Sopris Ranger District of the White River National Forest welcomes comments on its proposed projects outlined in the Hunter Creek-Smuggler Mountain Cooperative Plan. A public open house regarding this project will be held on Thursday, April 11, 2013 from 3:30-6:30 pm at the Pitkin County Rio Grande Room (455 Rio Grande Place, Aspen, CO).

The Hunter Creek-Smuggler Mountain Cooperative Plan is unique in scale, scope, and community engagement. It was initiated by the local community and embodies a planning approach that relies on cooperation and partnerships to define the long-term vision for the area. Located on the Aspen-Sopris Ranger District, the Hunter-Smuggler planning area consists of 4,681 acres adjacent to Smuggler Mountain Open Space and private property. It is also the scenic backdrop for the community of Aspen. This approach and the subsequent environmental analysis is anticipated to ultimately achieve measurable benefits for wildlife habitat, forest health, and recreation at the landscape scale. The Hunter Smuggler Cooperative Plan is published online at [www.hunter-smugglerplan.com](http://www.hunter-smugglerplan.com).

According to Scott Fitzwilliams, Forest Supervisor for the White River National Forest, “I am excited to move the Hunter-Smuggler Cooperative Plan forward. This approach is somewhat new to the White River National Forest with partners and communities initiating dialogue through such a community effort. The public input part of this process is key to our understanding of any concerns regarding this proposal.”

Public comments are requested by April 29, 2013 in order to help inform the decision to be made by identifying resource issues and concerns as well as how they may be addressed. Written, facsimile, hand-delivered, oral and electronic comments will be accepted. Electronic comments may be submitted at: <https://cara.ecosystem-management.org/Public/CommentInput?Project=41413>. Additional information regarding this action can be obtained from: Martha Moran at [mmoran@fs.fed.us](mailto:mmoran@fs.fed.us), or (970) 945-3312.

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